

A portrait of Lakshman Kadirgamar, a middle-aged man with grey hair, wearing a white shirt and a grey tie. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a neutral expression. The background is a blurred bookshelf filled with books.

I.B. TAURIS

# DEMOCRACY, SOVEREIGNTY AND TERROR

LAKSHMAN KADIRGAMAR  
ON THE FOUNDATIONS OF  
INTERNATIONAL ORDER

Edited by  
SIR ADAM ROBERTS



'For those of us who have to live with terrorism, when we leave home in the morning there is no guarantee that we will come back.' Thus Lakshman Kadirgamar, Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister in 1994–2001 and 2004–5, foreshadowed his own assassination in 2005. He was an astute and brave thinker and practitioner on many key issues in international politics. Long before 9/11 he warned Western democracies that they were too passive about the activities on their soil of foreign terrorist movements and their front organizations. He was a strong advocate of democracy and human rights, conducting the first-ever Amnesty International investigation into the problems of a particular country – Vietnam. He was uniquely effective in countering the propaganda campaigns of the separatist Tamil Tigers in his native Sri Lanka – the movement which ultimately took his life. This definitive work explores the continuing relevance of his ideas for the modern world. *Democracy, Sovereignty and Terror* presents Kadirgamar's distinctive voice in his major speeches. It also offers a convincing picture, by those who knew him, of a scholar-statesman who was both a realist and an idealist. He showed that these approaches can be combined in both thought and action.



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# Foreword

Lakshman Kadirgamar was a truly remarkable person whose achievements as a sportsman, international lawyer and statesman were all outstanding. I got to know him when we were both studying law at Oxford University. Coming from Ceylon and South Africa respectively, we had one unusual legal interest in common: the Roman–Dutch system of law, which had an odd after-life in our two countries even after it had been replaced in the Netherlands.

A word of explanation may be needed. The Dutch colonies of Ceylon and the Cape of Good Hope were occupied by the British early in the Napoleonic Wars, a few years before the Netherlands itself replaced its Roman–Dutch common law with a version of the Code Napoleon. The British rule that the laws of a conquered territory remain unchanged meant that the Roman–Dutch law survived, and continues to survive, in Sri Lanka and South Africa. It was this somewhat esoteric legal background, as well as our colonial origins, which Lakshman Kadirgamar and I shared when we came to Oxford in the mid-1950s. We met occasionally, although I saw rather more of his countryman Lalith Athulathmudali, who was reading, as I was, for a general degree in Jurisprudence, whereas Lakshman was engaged in the more solitary task of writing a thesis on the Roman–Dutch law of easements. He focused on the law of not only his native country, Ceylon, but also my native country, South Africa.

There was then a considerable gap until Lakshman as foreign minister, passing through London, picked up the acquaintanceship by occasionally asking me to a drink or dinner at the Sri Lanka High Commission. Our conversations were relaxed, between people with much in common, including Amnesty International. Lakshman had been the first person to have done an investigation into a country for Amnesty, which he did in South Vietnam 1963–4: the resulting report is reproduced in this book. At our meetings in London over 30 years later I knew that I was remote from the practical application of our liberal principles while Lakshman's were being daily tested by the hideous realities of terrorism in Sri Lanka.

It was only when I read the essays and speeches collected in this volume that I realized the full extent of Lakshman's talents and achievements. Quite apart from their content, they show that he was master of powerful English prose; clear, virile, succinct. The quotations from familiar literature are apt and often unacknowledged, paying the listener the compliment of assuming that no laboured attribution is required. (I particularly liked the

reference to Thucydides Book 5 in his Shastri Memorial Lecture.) But the most impressive feature is of course their prescience and realism about terrorism: its international character and its effect upon an open democracy. On 18 September 2000 Lakshman said to the United Nations General Assembly:

A democratic state, because of its openness, its laws, traditions and practices, and its commitment to tolerance and dissent, is especially vulnerable to the deployment of force against it by any group within its boundaries. An internal armed challenge to any state anywhere is a challenge to all states everywhere. Unless all states, democratic states in particular, agree to come to the aid of a state in such peril, democracy itself will be imperilled everywhere. Democracy will not survive.

When the security and integrity of one state is threatened by an armed group within it, surely – especially in these contemporary times, with the Cold War far behind us – it behoves all other states to deny that armed group any encouragement, any succour, any safe haven. Today, for the prosecution of terrorist activities in one country, massive funds are raised with impunity in other countries, often through knowing or unknowing front organizations or other entities that now proliferate in many forms and in many countries – often, sadly, in the guise of charitable groups or groups ostensibly concerned with human rights or ethnic, cultural or social matters.

When Lakshman made this speech, he naturally had in mind the funds being raised for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) from the Tamil diaspora in North America and Europe. A year later came 9/11, funded with money raised largely in Saudi Arabia. Suddenly the United States and Europe had brought home to them the plain truth of what Lakshman had been saying. Draconian UN resolutions about the funding of terrorism were passed. Already in 1997, thanks largely to Lakshman's tireless advocacy, the United States had included the LTTE in a list of bodies designated as terrorist groups, thus assisting a process of limiting its sources of funds. Then in February 2001 the UK proscribed the LTTE and 20 other organizations. Other countries followed suit later – some only after Lakshman's assassination, though he had laid the groundwork earlier.

Often, at those international conferences in the 1990s, Lakshman must have thought himself a voice in the wilderness. And in the end, the inaction of the 'international community' in those years probably cost him his life. If governments had listened to Lakshman's consistent pleas earlier, and had curtailed the LTTE's fund-raising, the LTTE would not have been so strong and well armed; and recruitment of members to the terrorist organization would have been difficult. But at the same time his very effectiveness in getting the international community to wake up to LTTE activities added to the hazard of his position. He knew very well the risks he ran by his brave public stance, and he was prepared to pay the price, as he ultimately did in August 2005.

Lakshman achieved much for Sri Lanka, especially in winning respect for it during his time as foreign minister, and in getting the international community to act against the LTTE's international activities. We should all be grateful to Professor Roberts for producing this volume not just to keep his memory alive, but to give an account of Lakshman's coherent world view, a key part of which was his deeply serious attempt to indicate how terrorism could be tackled without undermining key principles of democracy, sovereignty, human rights and observance of the law of armed conflict.

Lord Hoffmann



# Preface and Acknowledgements

I first came across Lakshman Kadirgamar in 1964. I was interested in the Buddhist-led campaign of civil resistance in South Vietnam in 1963 which had resulted in the deposition of the autocratic President Ngo Dinh Diem. While these events were unfolding, Kadirgamar, a young Sri Lankan lawyer widely respected for his abilities, had been asked to investigate the treatment of Buddhists in South Vietnam, becoming in the process the first person ever to conduct a formal investigation in a country on behalf of Amnesty International. I wanted to get hold of his report, so I wrote him a letter and with his help obtained a copy.

About four decades later, when I was Professor of International Relations at Oxford University and a Fellow of Balliol College, I discovered belatedly that Kadirgamar, by now Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka, was a former student of the college (1956–9) and, indeed, a former President of the Oxford Union. So our old correspondence was renewed. Shortly thereafter, in 2004, he was elected an Honorary Fellow of the College and came back to it on two occasions. I found him intelligent, interesting, hard-working and above all brave. He knew that, as the most prominent Tamil in the Sri Lankan government, he was a target of the separatist Tamil Tigers, and had clearly decided that if he was to be killed it would be with his head held high.

In March 2005, when I was visiting the region, I went to Sri Lanka at his invitation to give some lectures. My wife Prinkie and I saw him in action in Colombo with students, colleagues and at well-attended meetings, and we spent an evening with him and his wife Suganthie at their official residence. We also saw the extraordinary security measures to protect him from the inevitable. Hating to be so constrained, he would stop to chat when the security officials wanted to whisk him into the bullet-proof car. In August that year the security arrangements failed. A marksman, firing from a house overlooking his private residence, killed him after he came out of his open-air pool where he had been taking an evening swim.

We got on for some simple reasons. The most obvious is that we agreed about a lot beside the Buddhist campaign in South Vietnam. We shared an interest in international organizations: in both cases it was cautious, and was combined with a belief that the sovereign state is not about to disappear. We both recognized the virtues of democracy as a form of government, but were critical of spreading it at gunpoint. We had both written extensively about terrorism. On one occasion in my room in Balliol he

asked me what the best analysis of suicide bombers was: when I dug out what I considered the most incisive study of that dismal topic, he could not wait to read it, and we went together to the college's copying room. I appreciated his enthusiasm for academic analysis – in my experience it was unusual among foreign ministers. I admired his principled opposition to bribery and corruption. But even more I liked his energy, wit, warmth and courage.

I conceived the idea for this book in the months following his assassination. It has no claims to being a biography, but it does offer a series of accounts of the man, his work and his ideas. I have prepared it because I found his work interesting and deserving of a wider audience. I was particularly intrigued by the way in which he combined consistent toughness against terrorism with a belief in respect for the sovereignty of states – a position very different from that of the US and UK in the 'war on terror' from 2001 onwards. Does Kadirgamar's position make sense? This book seeks to provide answers, but you must decide for yourself.

The first part of this book consists of appraisals by people who knew Kadirgamar and his work. He would not have wanted a hagiographical work. I have encouraged the contributors to be frank about his flaws and failures as well as his achievements. The contributors all knew him personally, and saw him from very different vantage points. The picture that emerges is, I believe, true to the man.

The documents, which form the main part of this book, comprise a small selection of his many speeches, lectures and reports. After inspecting a large number of them, mainly in Colombo, I chose those which best represented the various subjects in the politics and international relations of his time on which he had a distinctive contribution.

A word is needed about the sources for the texts of his speeches that I have used. I have not listed them separately for each document. In most cases there was more than one source for the same speech or statement: typically his original text (and sometimes more than one version of that), which I obtained from the Kadirgamar papers in Colombo; and a full transcript of what he said, often provided by the host organization. These materials show that he often made revisions, cuts and additions up to the last moment. I have generally accepted these changes, but where there was some gap, error or lack of clarity in the transcript I checked his original draft, using it as a basis for corrections.

I have edited the documents with a light touch, letting his words speak for themselves with the minimum of interruption. At the risk of allowing some overlap between documents, the only cuts I have made are of purely formal text such as his thanks to the chair, a few minor repetitions and his uses of such phrases as 'ladies and gentlemen'. I have followed the publishers' style rules in a range of minor matters, such as changing

his lawyerly capital 'S' for 'State' into lower case, and shortening 'United Nations' to 'UN'.

All that I have added to the documents are (1) the prefatory notes indicating the context in which each speech was given; (2) the subheadings, to make the texts easier to navigate – only the 1964 Amnesty report had subheadings in the original; and (3) the endnotes, to provide information about people, parties, events and sources that might not be familiar to the reader. I take full responsibility for all these notes in the documents and for any errors in them: their wording is emphatically mine, not Lakshman's.

Where he quotes from a speech, treaty, article etc., I have generally been able to locate the source and provide an endnote reference to it. In a few cases I have made very minor corrections to the quotations in his text so that they conform to the original source of the quote: none of these significantly affects the meaning. As I was confident they would be when I embarked on this work, his references to facts, laws, court cases, writers and so on were accurate and well-sourced – which is remarkable from someone so busy in international public life.

\*\*\*\*\*

In preparing this book I had significant help from many people. First and foremost I thank Lakshman's widow, Suganthie Kadirgamar. An experienced lawyer in her own right, she provided me with the texts of many of Lakshman's papers, she encouraged me to continue with the project and she dealt with my numerous queries. When I revisited Sri Lanka in 2006 she welcomed me to her home, let me look through an array of his papers, and introduced me to many of Lakshman's friends and colleagues.

I also thank the many other Sri Lankans who provided excellent guidance. It is invidious to name names, but perhaps I can be forgiven for giving particular thanks to two of that younger generation of diplomats for whom Lakshman ensured a high standard of professional training: Mahishini Colonné and Kulatilaka Lenagala, who worked closely with Kadirgamar in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and are now Deputy High Commissioners of Sri Lanka in India and the UK respectively, provided prompt and thoughtful responses to my many queries. In addition, after enquiries elsewhere had failed, Sanjaya Colonné, Strategic Affairs Adviser to the Ministry of Defence, provided hard-to-obtain maps relating to the conflict in Sri Lanka.

Finally, I thank all those in the UK who assisted. At Oxford, Anna Sander, the Lonsdale Curator at Balliol College's newly-opened Historic Collections Centre, unearthed valuable material from Lakshman's time as a graduate student. The Oxfordshire Record Office, which holds the Oxford Union Society's archives, was notably helpful in digging out material about his time as President of the Union. The Bodleian Library in Oxford, and

British Library in London, came up trumps with exceptionally rare publications recording Lakshman's early achievements. At the British Academy, Kiare Ladner retyped some of the documents that I had only in paper form. My wife Prinkie helped crucially with proof-reading successive texts and transcripts: we had visited Sri Lanka together in March 2005 – the last time that either of us saw Lakshman. And at I.B.Tauris I thank particularly Iradj Bagherzade and Lester Crook, who were wonderfully consistent in their support for this project. Lester Crook's doctoral thesis at Birkbeck College, London, in 1969 was on 'The Colonial Office and political problems in Ceylon and Mauritius 1907–21': he knows more about Sri Lanka's history than I ever will.

Balliol College had an important place in Lakshman's stellar career and in his affections, so proceeds from this book will go to Balliol, with the aim of assisting students from Asia, and in particular South Asia, to study at Oxford.

AR, Oxford, June 2012

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# List of Contributors

**A. Peter Burleigh** served twice in Sri Lanka, as US Ambassador from 1995 to 1997, and as a junior officer from 1968 to 1970. Though he retired from government diplomatic service in 2000, he was recalled to serve in 2011–12 as US Chargé d’Affaires in New Delhi.

**Shaun Donnelly**, a career diplomat for 36 years in the US Foreign Service, served as US Ambassador to Sri Lanka in 1997–2000. He was later Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs and Assistant US Trade Representative (at the White House) for the Middle East and Europe. After retiring from the government, he was an executive at two large US business associations.

**Leonard Hoffmann** (Baron Hoffmann of Chedworth) was a Judge of the High Court of Justice, Chancery Division, in 1985–92, Lord Justice of Appeal, 1992–5, and Lord of Appeal in Ordinary, 1995–2009. From 1990 he served as unpaid director of the Amnesty International Charity Ltd – the charity wing of Amnesty. He has held a number of academic posts, and since 2009 has been Honorary Professor of Intellectual Property Law, Queen Mary, University of London.

**Karl F. Inderfurth** served as Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs from 1997 to 2001. He is currently Senior Advisor and Wadhwani Chair in US–India Policy Studies at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington DC. Prior to his CSIS appointment, he was the John O. Rankin Professor of the Practice of International Affairs at George Washington University. From 1993 to 1997 he served as the US Representative for Special Political Affairs to the United Nations, with the rank of ambassador.

**Shivshankar Menon** has been National Security Adviser to the Prime Minister of India since January 2010. He had previously served as High Commissioner to Sri Lanka (1997–2000), to Pakistan (2003–6) and as Ambassador to Israel (1995–7) and China (2000–03). He was also Foreign Secretary (head of the Indian Foreign Service) in 2006–09.

**Chris Patten** (Baron Patten of Barnes) has been Chancellor of Oxford University since 2003. He has been Co-Chair of the International Crisis Group since 2004. He is also, since 2011, Chairman of the BBC Trust. He was

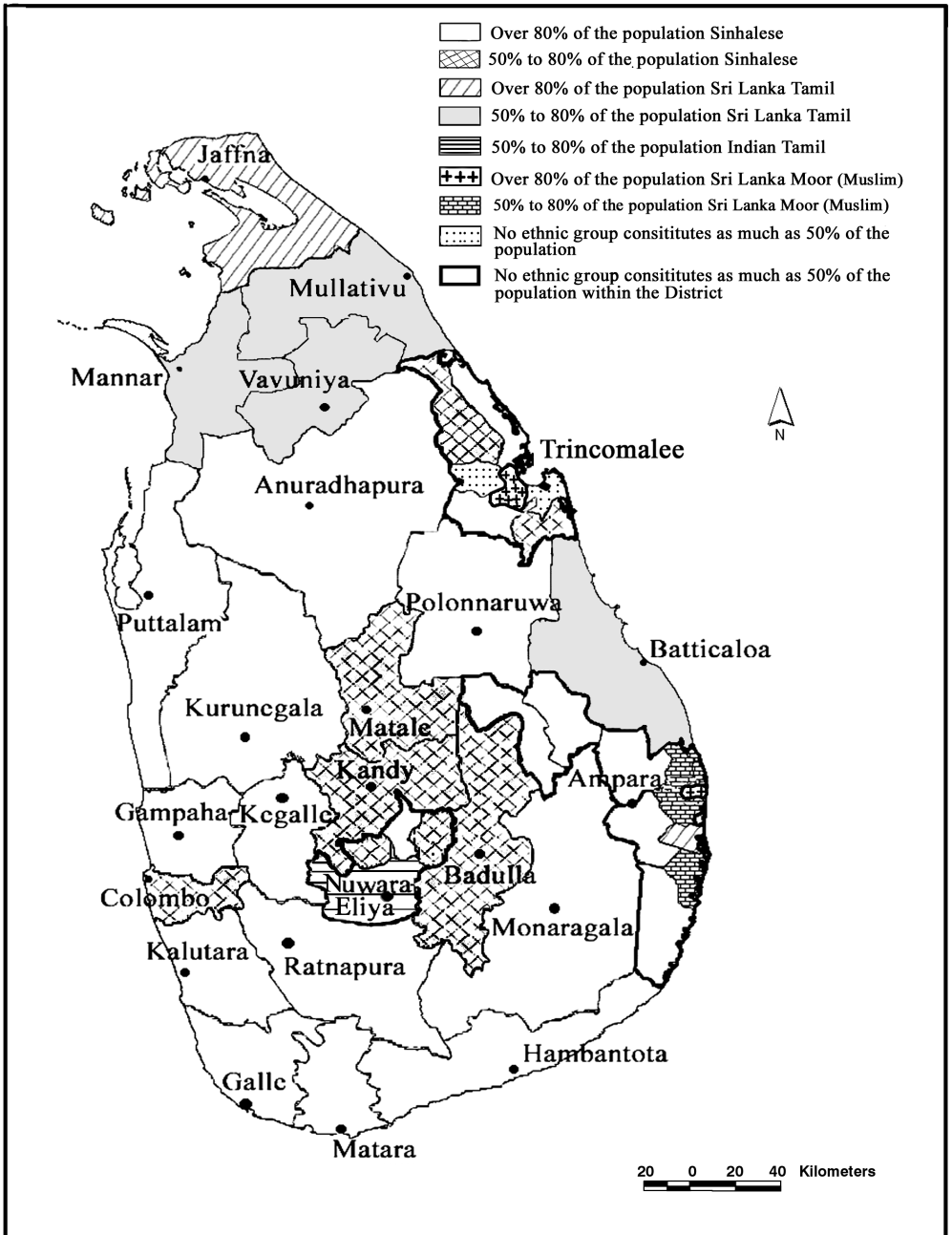
European Commissioner for External Relations, 2000–04. His books include *East and West* (Macmillan, London, 1998); *Not Quite the Diplomat: Home Truths About World Affairs* (Allen Lane, London, 2005); and *What Next? Surviving the 21st Century* (Allen Lane, London, 2008).

**Nirupama Rao** is India's ambassador to the USA. Having joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1973, she served as High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka in 2004–06, and then as Ambassador to China in 2006–09. She was appointed Foreign Secretary (head of the Indian Foreign Service) on 1 August 2009. In 2001–02 she was the spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs at its headquarters in New Delhi. She has also served in the Indian embassies in Moscow and Washington DC. A collection of her poems, *Rain Rising*, was published in India in 2004.

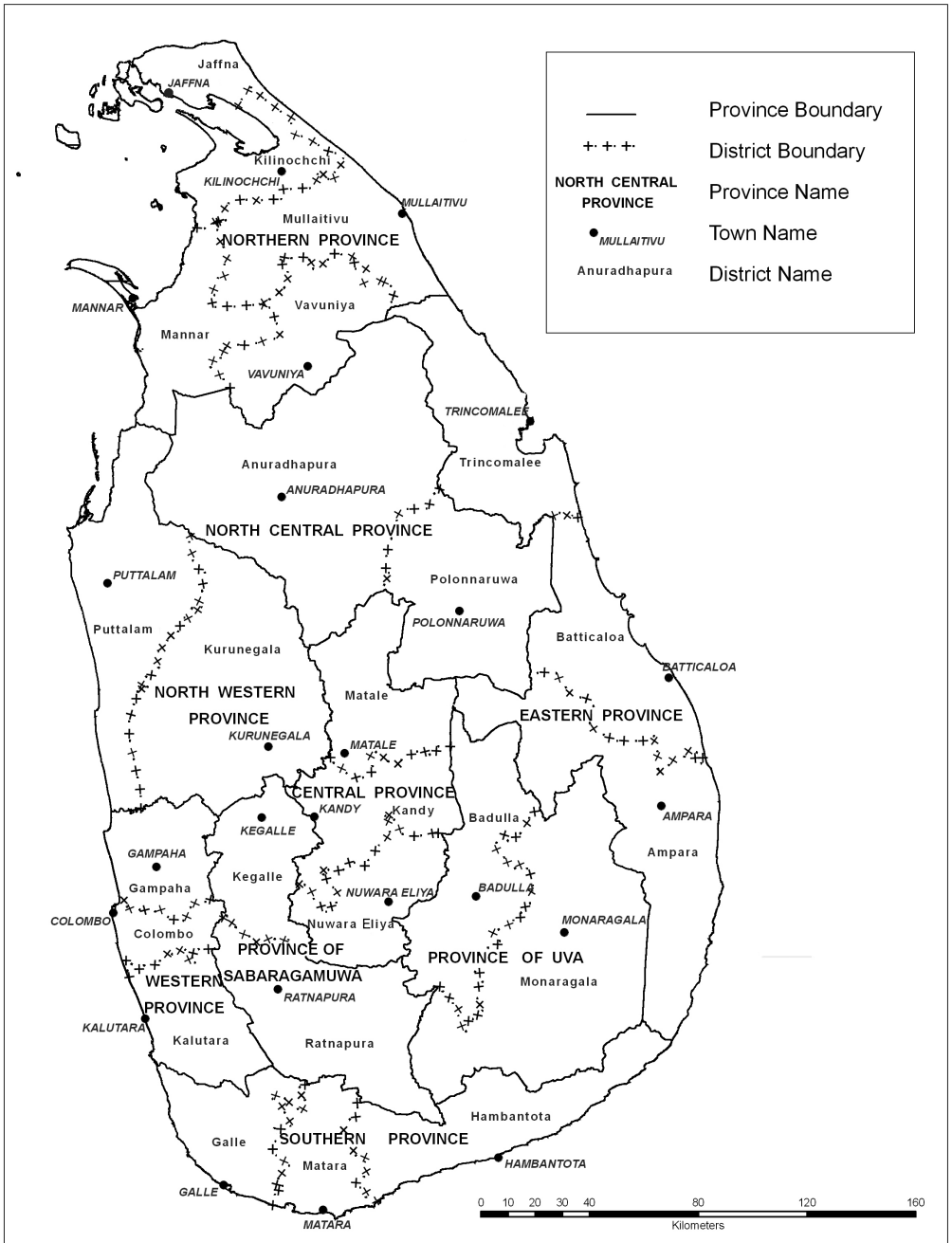
**Sinha Ratnatunga** has been Editor of *The Sunday Times*, Colombo, since 1990. He is a director of the Sri Lanka Press Institute; the Sri Lanka College of Journalism; and the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) based in Paris and Darmstadt. He is the author of *Politics of Terrorism: The Sri Lanka Experience* (International Fellowship for Social and Economic Development, Canberra, 1988). He is also an Attorney-at-Law with a special interest in intellectual property law.

**Adam Roberts** has been President of the British Academy since 2009. He is Emeritus Professor of International Relations, Oxford University; and Emeritus Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford. His books include *Nations in Arms: The Theory and Practice of Territorial Defence* (Chatto & Windus, London, 1976); and as joint editor, *The United Nations Security Council and War: The Evolution of Thought and Practice since 1945* (Oxford University Press, 2008).

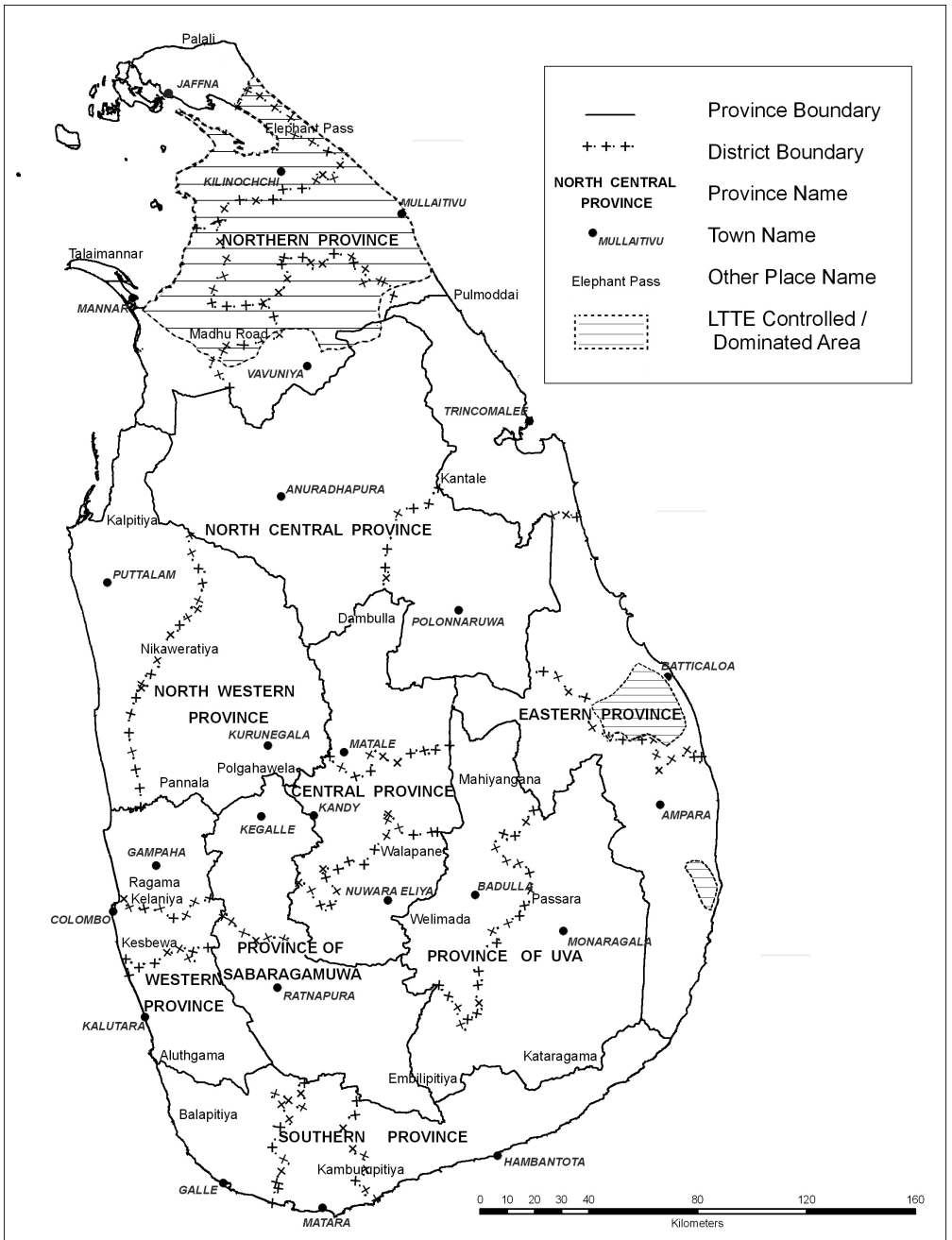
**Sarath N. Silva** was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka from 1999 to 2009. He was first appointed to the Supreme Court in 1995. In 1996 he was appointed a President's Counsel. In 1996–9 he served as Attorney-General of Sri Lanka. His primary and secondary school education was at Trinity College, Kandy.



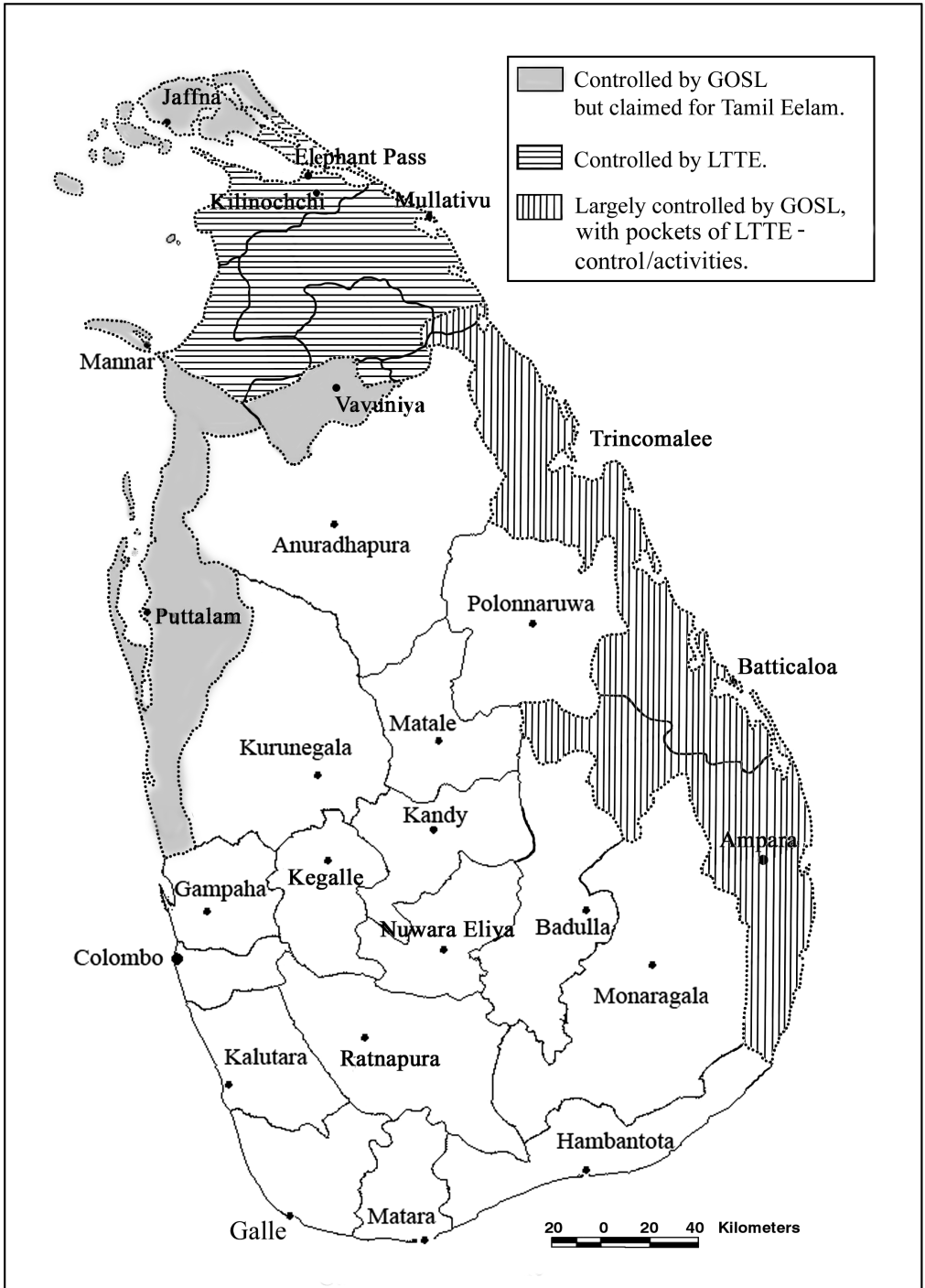
**Map 1:** Distribution of the ethnic groups in Sri Lanka, based on the 1981 census – the last to be conducted in all districts of the country. Significant changes since then are not reflected in this map. Prepared by the Department of Geography, University of Colombo.



**Map 2:** Sri Lanka, province and district boundaries. Prepared by the Survey Department of Sri Lanka.



**Map 3:** Areas controlled by the LTTE following the Ceasefire Agreement of 22 February 2002. There were numerous breaches of the ceasefire. In May 2003 Kadirgamar criticised it strongly; and the government formally renounced it on 3 January 2008. Prepared by the Survey Department of Sri Lanka and adapted by the Ministry of Defence, Sri Lanka.



**Map 4:** Approximate areas controlled by the LTTE and the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) as of late 2005. Organizations supporting the creation of a Tamil state claimed all the areas shown in shading. Prepared by the Office of Strategic Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Sri Lanka.

PART I  
Appraisals



## CHAPTER 1

# ‘Dare the Deepening Tide’

## Lakshman Kadirgamar on the Revolution of our Times

Adam Roberts

The life of Lakshman Kadirgamar is symbolic of the great revolution of our times – the end of the old European colonial empires. Born in Ceylon under British colonial rule, he exemplified the hopes, the difficulties, the successes and the tragedies of the decolonization process. He had unusually clear views about the many difficult issues – both domestic and international – faced by post-colonial states: their changing constitutional arrangements, their economic development, the relations of their different communities, their vulnerability to corruption and political violence, their search for friends and allies, and their need for a strong framework of international norms and institutions.

Lakshman was just 15 years old when, on 4 February 1948, the state of Ceylon (since 1972, Sri Lanka) achieved its independence in a ceremony in Torrington Square, Colombo – subsequently renamed Independence Square. In the years that followed, as a brilliant athlete and as a representative of the country’s Tamil minority, he took part in at least one prominent relay-running ceremony celebrating the country’s independence and the unity of its peoples. Some accounts of this participation are probably myth.<sup>1</sup> However, the factual record is remarkable enough to need no embellishment. On 23 February 1952, the opening day of the Colombo Exhibition, Lakshman was one of four celebrated athletes who, at the final stage of four long relay runs from distant parts of Sri Lanka, carried respectively scrolls in Sinhala, Tamil, Arabic and English to four young ladies representing the major communities of the country.<sup>2</sup> This exhibition was closely tied to the ambitious economic development aims that had been proclaimed in 1950 in the Colombo Plan.<sup>3</sup> Lakshman’s run was at once symbolic of his role as a Tamil, his commitment to inter-communal solidarity and his faith in the alluring prospect of an international wave of development of which his newly-independent country would be part. In short, this

run by young athletes was a symbol of the hopes of a new and better post-colonial order.

Over half a century later, on 15 August 2005, it was again in Colombo, in Independence Square, that the assassinated minister was cremated. He was a victim of the political failures, communal divisions and systematic terrorism which he had consistently sought to tackle, showing extraordinary intellectual and physical courage as he did so. His journey from celebrations so symbolic of Sri Lanka's unity to a cremation so symbolic of its subsequent troubles is an exploration of the problems of the post-colonial age – not just those of his country and his times, but also those of our world and our times in the second decade of the twenty-first century.

Lakshman Kadirgamar is most widely remembered as a remarkably successful foreign minister of Sri Lanka in 1994–2001 and from 2004 until his assassination on 12 August 2005. He worked skilfully and steadfastly to achieve three inter-related objectives. The first was to secure good, even close, relations simultaneously with a range of countries that mattered deeply, if in very different ways, to Sri Lanka: these included China, India, Pakistan, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States. The second was to engage Sri Lanka in support of international organizations and international norms: he was especially concerned to ensure that his country could stand tall in international fora, and could be clearly identified as supporting the rule of law, human rights and prohibition of the use of child soldiers. The third was securing the international isolation of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), usually known simply as the Tamil Tigers, with which the government of Sri Lanka had been in conflict since 1983. None of these three objectives was wholly new for Sri Lanka, and he never claimed that they were. However, in his periods of office the governments of which he was a member achieved more on all three fronts than their predecessors.

There is a strong tradition that 'the Head of Government in Sri Lanka has had his or her personal style and personal influence on foreign policy decision-making.'<sup>4</sup> Since the time of J. R. Jayewardene, Sri Lanka's first Executive President (1978–89), it has been the president, not the prime minister, who as head of government has the main executive authority.<sup>5</sup> Lakshman worked closely with Chandrika Kumaratunga, President of Sri Lanka from November 1994 to November 2005. However, as foreign minister he was more involved in actually making foreign policy than most of his predecessors had been; and in a difficult period for Sri Lanka, riven by internal conflict, he greatly improved the country's international position. On 12 August 2005 he was killed by the Tamil Tigers, as he was pretty sure he would be, but his achievements did not die with him. The diplomatic isolation of the Tamil Tigers, that he had worked so skilfully to achieve,

helped to pave the way for their eventual, and controversy-ridden, military defeat in 2009.

On the central issue facing the government of Sri Lanka in his time and subsequently, he had a distinctive and clear view. He came to realize, more than many of his colleagues in Sri Lankan public life, that achieving peace with the Tamil Tigers was almost impossible. At the same time, he placed great emphasis on the need to wage the struggle in a manner acceptable to international opinion and consistent with the laws of war. And in the aftermath of the conflict he would certainly have worked to help achieve a magnanimous settlement taking into account the rights of minorities.

His was a remarkable record by any standard, and especially for a man who first became a member of parliament, and foreign minister, at the late age of 62, having previously had a very different career as a lawyer and as a senior official of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in Geneva. The chapters in this book by people who knew him bear impressive witness to the extraordinary effectiveness of his public service from 1994 to 2005, and to the personal qualities and principles that were a key part of his achievement.

Yet this book is not written to bolster claims about Lakshman’s success. This is not only for the obvious reason – that there were inevitably failures as well as successes – but also because, especially in politics, success is always a great deceiver. The events in which he was involved – deeply controversial anyway – may come to be viewed differently as times change and history moves on. Rather this book seeks to present Lakshman’s thought as part of a coherent world-view that has strong claims on our attention today.

As foreign minister, he was deeply concerned with advancing a well thought-out view of that series of complex and often contradictory processes that constitute the international relations of our times. He attached great importance to his speeches on the subject, putting much personal work into their preparation. However, his work was not confined to his own speeches, nor to the usual duties of a foreign minister – extensive and intensive as these were. He felt that with its rich heritage Sri Lanka should give the world, as he put it, ‘something more than just tea, tourism and terrorism’. He had extraordinarily wide interests, not least in the music, theatre and arts of both East and West. It was typical of him that he chaired a committee to assist in the preparation and publication of a stunning work about a fine Sri Lankan artist, Stanley Kirinde, spending much time coaxing potential donors and encouraging its author.<sup>6</sup> The book was launched in Colombo on 18 August 2005, just six days after Lakshman’s assassination, amid many tributes to his role in the project.

He also made strenuous efforts to develop Sri Lankan expertise in international relations. He took steps to ensure that recruits for Sri Lanka’s

diplomatic service were chosen purely on merit, and he improved their training. His stint as foreign minister is considered a golden era, in which a previously disparate and ineffective group of diplomats was given punch and purpose – and were at last able to put up considerable resistance to LTTE propaganda work.

These efforts continued to the very end of his life. By a tragic irony, the day of Kadirgamar's assassination was also the day on which he fulfilled a long-held ambition by launching a new journal, *International Relations in a Globalising World*, of which he was editor-in-chief.<sup>7</sup> He had discussed the project with me at his official residence in Colombo earlier that year, inveigling me into writing an article for it. He told me how he saw the journal as central to his ambition to develop Sri Lanka's depth of expertise in world politics. In launching the journal at a ceremony in Colombo on 12 August 2005 he said: 'It is a great day of joy and achievement.' He indicated that the discipline of international relations had expanded to such levels that any conceivable topic had bearing on it. He said the journal was his dream and he decided to take a plunge into the deep end when some had raised doubts as to the viability of the project.<sup>8</sup> Within a few hours of this moment of joy and achievement he was assassinated. Although the LTTE issued a statement denying its involvement, it is widely believed that it was responsible.<sup>9</sup> As with many murders attributed to the LTTE, the investigators at the time were unable to capture the assassins, who were believed to have fled to LTTE-controlled areas. In 2008 six persons were indicted in connection with his killing. The first name on the list was Velupillai Prabhakaran, leader of the LTTE. He, along with three of the others indicted, was subsequently killed in the conflict. The two remaining indicted persons were held in custody and then tried in 2009–12 in connection with the assassination.

## Twenty-first Century International Order

This chapter embarks upon, and the rest of the book continues, an exploration of Lakshman's understanding of international relations. As he was only too well aware, international order today rests on foundations which, while not wholly new, contain some new elements. The problems with which he grappled continuously as foreign minister were problems that are all too typical of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century. In particular:

1. It is conflict within states, not war between them, that poses the greatest problems in the everyday lives of millions of people, and in the conduct of international relations. Such conflict – which has taken many forms, from *coups d'état* to civil wars – is a reflection of difficulties inherent